

Date: June 16, 2014

To: New Private Schools Interested in Participating
in the Private School Choice Programs (PSCP)

From: Latoya Holiday, Consultant
Private School Choice Programs

Re: 2015-16 Registration Information for New Schools

Wis. Stat. §§ 118.60 and 119.23 define a “new” school as a private school that has been in operation for less than 12 consecutive months or has fewer than 40 students in two or fewer grade levels. A private school that meets the definition of a new school and is interested in participating in one of the Private School Choice Programs (PSCP) during the 2015-16 school year must submit to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), **by August 1, 2014**, all of the following:

- Notice of New School’s Intent to Participate in the PSCP for the 2015-16 School Year and Agreement to Comply with Procedural Requirements
- Auditor Fee and Form
- Disclosure of Information Form and School Policies
- Continuing Eligibility Standard the School will meet in the 2015-16 School Year
- Anticipated Budget and Cash Flow

Additionally, Wis. Stat. §§ 118.60 and 119.23 stipulate that a new school interested in participating in the PSCP in the 2015-16 school year must obtain preaccreditation by a preaccrediting entity listed under Wis. Stat §§ 118.60 (1)(cm) or 119.23(1)(ap) **by December 15, 2014**.

Further explanation regarding each of these and additional requirements follows. **Please note all of the forms and the auditor fee are due to DPI by August 1, 2014 unless otherwise noted. The documents and fee must be received at DPI no later than 4:30 p.m. on August 1, 2014.** If a new school misses this deadline the school will not be eligible to participate in the PSCP during the 2015-16 school year. Therefore, it is in the school’s best interest to submit these required forms as soon as possible so that any errors or questions can be resolved well in advance of the August 1 deadline.

Notice of School’s Intent to Participate and Agreement to Comply with Procedural

Requirements: The new school’s Notice of Intent to Participate (signed and dated by the school’s choice administrator) must arrive at the DPI no later than 4:30 p.m. on **August 1, 2014**, for the school to participate in the PSCP for the 2015-16 school year. The form with original signature is required. No faxed or email copies will be accepted. The school’s choice administrator should read the form in its entirety and ensure they understand the entire form before signing. By signing the form, the school’s administrator agrees:

- The school will comply with all program requirements;
- Compliance with program requirements constitutes a condition of receipt of funds; and
- In the event of failure to comply, the school’s participation in the program can be terminated and/or PSCP payments withheld.

Please note the administrator signing the Notice of Intent to Participate must be the sole owner of the school or appointed by the operating organization of the school and have at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education.

State law requires schools to ensure that an owner, officer, director, trustee, administrator, administrator's designee or an individual with administrative, financial or pupil health and safety responsibilities, whether compensated or uncompensated, is not a disqualified person as defined under Wis. Stat. §§118.60(1)(ag) or 119.23(1)(ag). A disqualified person is defined as a person who had a controlling ownership interest in, or was an officer, director or trustee of a private school barred or terminated from the program, or was the administrator of a private school, a person identified as an administrative designee, or an individual responsible for the activity that resulted in an order being issued barring or terminating a private school from participation in the program. If a school retains a disqualified person, the school may be terminated from the program.

Auditor Fee and Form: New private schools intending to participate in the PSCP during the 2015-16 school year must, no later than 4:30 p.m. on August 1, 2014, pay to the department a nonrefundable fee of **\$750**. The form with original signature is required. No faxed or emailed copies will be accepted. Payment of the nonrefundable fee must be made in the form of a cashier's check payable to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Other forms of payment will not be accepted. The payment should be mailed to the DPI business office along with the completed Auditor Fee Form. **No refunds of the fee will be made, regardless of whether or not the school participates in the PSCP.** If it is later determined that the auditor fee for participation in the 2015-16 school year is more than \$750, the new school must pay to the department the difference by February 1, 2015. If it is later determined that the auditor fee is less than \$750, the department will provide a refund of the overage to the new school.

Disclosure of Information Form and School Policies: By August 1, 2014, new private schools intending to participate in the Private School Choice Programs must submit, to the department, the information required under Wis. Stat. §§ 118.60(6m)(a) and (c) or 119.23 (6m)(a) and (c) related to the school's policies, procedures, and governing board. Schools should complete the Disclosure of Information Form and obtain the required board member signatures, if applicable, on the form. All of the required policies and information listed on Page 2 of the form must be attached as directed. The original form with signatures is required, no faxed or emailed copies will be accepted. If your school has more than six board members, please use multiple forms. Please note the language on the form related to the disqualified persons law. If a school is terminated from the program, the school's board members could be disqualified persons under state law. If this were to occur, the department will mail a legal notice, with appeal rights, to the school's board members. The appeal rights will expire 14 days after the date of the notice. While we hope that this situation will not arise, we want to take steps to ensure that all parties involved, including board members, receive timely notification if it were to occur. Therefore, we request that all board members provide an alternate mailing address in order to better ensure a school's board members receive the legal notice timely and is able to exercise his or her appeal rights.

Continuing Eligibility Standard: By August 1, 2014, new private schools intending to participate in the Private School Choice Programs shall submit to the department, a statement indicating the continuing eligibility standard specified under Wis. Stat. §§ 118.60(7)(a) or 119.23(7)(a) the school intends to meet in the 2015-16 school year. The school should indicate the standard it has chosen by completing the Continuing Eligibility form. If in the 2015-16 school year a school fails to meet the standard it has chosen, the school may be barred from participation in the PSCP in the following year. For more information, please see the informational bulletin at http://sms.dpi.wi.gov/files/sms/doc/mpcp_bulletin_02-04_continue-eligible.doc.

Budget and Cash Flow Form: All new schools are required to submit to the DPI, by August 1, 2014, an anticipated budget and cash flow form. New schools must use the Excel form provided by the DPI. Once the form has been completed in Excel the school must print a copy and have the school's choice administrator sign the form and mail or scan and email it to the DPI by August 1, 2014.

Preaccreditation Requirement: New schools intending to participate in the PSCP in the 2015-16 school year must obtain preaccreditation by a preaccrediting entity as defined in Wis. Stat. §§ 118.60(1) or 119.23(1) by **December 15, 2014**. The law stipulates that new schools must obtain preaccreditation by the Wisconsin North Central Association, the Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools Accreditation, the Independent Schools Association of the Central States, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation, National Lutheran School Accreditation, Wisconsin Association of Christian Schools or the Archdiocese or diocese in which the school is located.

Training Requirements: New schools are required to participate in fiscal management training in order to be eligible to participate in the PSCP in 2015-16. The school's choice administrator is required to attend three training workshops in Madison. The first training workshop will take place during the summer of 2014. The additional two workshops will be held in the beginning of 2015. The one-day workshop that will be held during the summer of 2014 will provide a brief overview of general program requirements and will cover those requirements that must be met by August 1, 2014 including the completion of the budget form. Attendance for the entire workshop is required. Participants can register for the summer 2014 workshop online at http://sms.dpi.wi.gov/sms_pscp_reg_2015-16.

When deciding who will attend the training workshops it is strongly advised that new schools send more than one representative who might qualify to serve as the school's choice administrator. It is also strongly suggested that the individual that will assist in completing the budget (e.g. bookkeeper, accountant, business manager, etc.) attend the first workshop that will be held during the summer of 2014.

New School Registration Checklist: This checklist was created to assist you in ensuring all forms and requirements due by August 1, 2014 are completed correctly. After completing the required forms, please complete the checklist. The completed checklist should be submitted to DPI along with all of the registration forms no later than 4:30 p.m. on **August 1, 2014**.

All of the required forms and training registration information can be obtained at http://sms.dpi.wi.gov/sms_pscp_reg_2015-16.

By December 31, 2014, the DPI will notify each new private school, in writing, whether it has satisfied the above requirements.

If you have questions concerning this information, please contact one of the choice consultants via phone: Latoya Holiday at 608-266-8066, Molly Koranda at 608-266-0523 or Patrick Gasper at 608-266-2853 or email to privateschoolchoice@dpi.wi.gov.